

# HELIO GAMING PLANS EXPANSION INTO AFRICA AND ASIA



Malta-based lottery provider Helio Gaming has been expanding extensively in Africa and Asia, signing new deals, and is all set to launch an all new product. 5 Star caught up with CEO Richard Mifsud to see what's happening in the world of lotteries.

**We hear you've been on your travels again. Where have you been spreading the Helio gospel recently?**

Most recently, we've been out in Manila as part of the SiGMA roadshow. The idea was to take 10 Malta-based suppliers to Asia and allow them to showcase their products and services to up to 200 operators. Whilst I was there, I also attended the ASEAN gaming summit and featured on a panel about artificial intelligence, blockchain and automation. After a whistle stop tour there, it's off to Kampala in Uganda for Sports Betting East Africa.

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Whilst I'm there I'll be speaking on a panel called Modernising bingo, lotteries and casino for the African millennial. We already have clients live in Africa, but there are a number of other operators in countries across the continent who could really benefit from modern lottery products. Asia is the same. We're used to hearing about their phenomenally successful sportsbooks and casinos, but outside of the big state

lotteries there is very little being done to bring exciting, high-frequency draws to the consumer. Last but not least, I'll be at the Prague Affiliate iGaming Conference. I'll be speaking on another panel there too, this time entitled: Lotteries evolution or Innovations, how it influences the iGaming world.

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**The mention of affiliates in Prague is an interesting one. Is that a part of the industry that you're looking to get into?**

Absolutely. You can probably count on one hand the number of traditional lotteries that have affiliate deals in place. The simple reason is that these businesses can't afford to use affiliates, given the small margins on tickets. But our products provide far better scope. For instance, if we sell an operator a lottery ticket for a Euro, they can then sell it to the customer for two euros, meaning a 40 per cent commission on GGR to an affiliate is not unduly burdensome. We believe sportsbooks and casinos are just as likely to want to take out customisable draws as existing lottery brands. Given that are very used to dealing with affiliates, we believe there is a great opportunity for them to get involved on the ground floor. We would love to speak to affiliates about how we can work together as this is really great untapped opportunity in my view.

**Any new deals in the pipeline?**

Lots I'm delighted to say, and the latest off the production line is with Knockout Gaming. They're based on Gozo, Malaga and Arizona, as many will know, and American-owned. But their real area of expertise are emerging markets. The deal will boost our

visibility with operators there, but it will also allow us to go live with the Knockout-operated brand Rush777.com in the first instance. In addition to that, we just gone live with BetConstruct's operators Vbet and Vivarobet. They are based in Armenia, obviously, but they have great reach in a number of other countries, particularly central Asia. These deals show the versatility and universality of our product range, and it is very pleasing to see it gaining traction around the world.

**Speaking of product ranges, we hear there is an exciting new product on the way. Can you tell us more?**

Yes, all will become clear shortly, but we are launching our own live lottery, which is very exciting. We have a number of different lottery draws available in the Hero family of games, and our betting on international lotteries is very popular, but this brings a new dimension. We are able to broadcast live lottery draws from studios here in Malta that bring a unique interactive and visual excitement to the process. It is probably too early to compare the two as equals, but we are hopeful that this product will have a similar affect to the vertical that live dealer has had in casino.

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Every operator worth its salts now has this, with many deriving very good revenues from live dealer. We are very excited about taking our equivalent live with a partner and are very confident that it will be very well-received by players. As with all of our products, the beauty of it for operators is that it is fully customisable so they can really take ownership. ✨